



Capacity Building for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Peacebuilding Interventions in Africa: A Comparative Case Study of Data Systems, Indicators and Institutional Capacity

Ndifon Neji Obi, PhD.

Department of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Peacebuilding in Africa increasingly depends on producing and using data, yet local actors' capacity to design indicators, manage data, and act on findings is uneven and often unmeasured. This article assesses monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity in five peacebuilding initiatives across Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa and derives a framework for strengthening it. A multiple-case, document-based design was used. Public programme, institutional and scholarly sources for each initiative were coded against six capacity dimensions (technical expertise; baselines and indicators; data management; standardisation and interoperability; resources and institutional support; feedback and evidence uptake) derived from theory-of-change logic and the policy-capacity framework of Wu, Ramesh and Howlett (2015). A four-level evidence scale was applied, and counts are descriptive. Document inclusion criteria, coding decision rules and operational definitions of the evidence scale are specified, and each gap is further classified by its principal source. The study found that constraints in resources and institutional support were evident in all five cases; weaknesses in technical expertise, standardisation and interoperability, and feedback and uptake were evident in three cases each; and weaknesses in baselines and indicators and in data management were evident in two cases. Strengths were also evident, notably digital baseline surveying in Mbizana and a predefined indicator system in the ECOWAS early-warning network. The gaps lay less in tools than in the arrangements that connect data to decisions. Only four of the 18 gaps rested mainly on technical skills; the rest arose from resource, procedural, institutional or political constraints. A five-step, locally owned capacity-building cycle (assess, co-design, institutionalise, measure, and feedback) is proposed and operationalised with responsible actors, expected outputs and measurable progress indicators. The findings are indicative: the sample is small, the sources are secondary, the initiatives are heterogeneous, and the design cannot establish causal links between particular gaps and peacebuilding outcomes.

Keywords: monitoring and evaluation; peacebuilding; capacity building; data systems; early warning; institutional capacity; Africa

INTRODUCTION

In October 2023, statisticians, computer scientists and data-management specialists met in Abidjan to review how the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) turns field observations into a regional security-risk score. The network draws on 77 field monitors reporting against 55 predefined conflict indicators, and the experts' recommendations (explore normalisation, correlation and modelling, and develop validation metrics) belong to the vocabulary of measurement rather than diplomacy (ECOWAS, 2023). That an intergovernmental peace institution should submit its measurement procedures to statistical scrutiny points to a wider shift. Peacebuilding in Africa has become a data-production enterprise, and its credibility increasingly depends on whether the people who generate, manage and interpret the data have the capacity to do so.

The demand for reliable evidence is rising with insecurity. Harris and Nkoko (2025) report that from around 2013, the number of armed conflicts in Africa increased to the point that over three-quarters of the continent's



population were less secure in 2023 than they were a decade earlier. Peacebuilding responses have multiplied accordingly, from community-level reconciliation to continental early-warning architecture (McNamee & Muyangwa, 2021). The effectiveness of these responses, including who benefits and why, cannot be determined without monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that are designed, implemented, and used by local actors.

The evidence base for such systems is thin. The OECD's guidance on evaluating peacebuilding treats clear and measurable objectives, baseline data and monitoring as preconditions for evaluability (OECD, 2012). In practice, Paffenholz (2016) observes that projects with well-developed baselines and theories of change embedded in a results-based framework are uncommon, and reliable national statistics and perception surveys are rarely available in complex conflict settings. Efforts to remedy the shortfall are themselves poorly documented: in a study of eight Anglophone African countries, Masvaure and Fish (2022) found that M&E capacity strengthening is ad hoc and concentrated on individual skills, while the effectiveness of such initiatives is rarely measured.

Two gaps motivate this paper. Conceptually, accounts of peacebuilding M&E tend to treat evaluation methodology and organisational capacity separately; the former is well-developed in practitioner guidance (Church & Rogers, 2006; OECD, 2012), while the latter is less so. Empirically, to the author's knowledge, few studies compare, side by side, the data systems of different types of African peacebuilding initiatives. The paper addresses both by combining a theory-of-change results chain (Weiss, 1995) with a policy-capacity diagnostic (Wu et al., 2015) and applying them to five initiatives: a community-based children's peacebuilding project in the Central African Republic, a regional faith-actor learning hub in East Africa, a UN-funded youth project in Tunisia, a local-governance intervention in South Africa and ECOWARN in West Africa.

The paper asks three questions. RQ1: What M&E capacity strengths and gaps can be identified across the five initiatives from the documented evidence? RQ2: Which capacity dimensions recur, and how do the patterns relate to theory-of-change and institutional-capacity explanations? RQ3: What capacity-building framework follows for local actors, governments, civil society organisations and donors?

The analysis builds on the author's earlier work on civil society and local ownership in peacebuilding (Obi, 2018a; Obi & Otu, 2018; Obi & Edet, 2023) and on early warning and response systems (Akujobi & Obi, 2024; Obi, 2025). Section 2 sets out the context and conceptual framework; Section 3 describes the method; Section 4 presents the cases; Section 5 compares them; Section 6 proposes a capacity-building framework; and Section 7 concludes.

CONTEXT AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict, non-state armed groups and the measurement problem

Harris (2024) classifies African armed violence into state-based conflict, non-state conflict and one-sided violence against civilians. Harris and Nkoko (2025) attribute much of the post-2013 rise in wars and battle casualties, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, to violence associated with jihadist groups. Each form of violence raises distinct measurement problems: contested territory, disputed attribution and limited access for data collectors. The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria is a prominent example of the pattern; related work by the author and colleagues addresses war economies (Obi et al., 2026), the security architecture of West Africa (Ayuk et al., 2026a) and the African Union's peace and security mechanisms in the Sahel (Ayuk et al., 2026b).

The relevance to M&E is practical. Where non-state armed groups hold territory or provide services, access for data collectors, the neutrality of informants and the attribution of change to any intervention all become contested. The International Institute for Strategic Studies (2026) notes that non-state armed groups are becoming more, not less, important to conflict dynamics, that many internal conflicts now involve several types of such groups, and that eastern DRC has been an epicentre of both group activity and international attempts to engage them. Paffenholz (2016) adds that in complex conflict settings national authorities are often dysfunctional and reliable national statistics, surveys and public-perception studies are rarely available. These



conditions argue for locally grounded M&E capacity: monitoring that depends on external data collectors is least feasible precisely where it is most needed.

Continental and regional frameworks have institutionalised data-driven prevention strategies. Article 12 of the Protocol establishing the African Union Peace and Security Council created a Continental Early Warning System built around a Situation Room responsible for data collection and analysis and linked to the observation and monitoring units of regional mechanisms (African Union, 2002). ECOWAS devoted Chapter IV of its 1999 Protocol to a sub-regional peace and security observation system (ECOWAS, 1999) and operationalised prevention through the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECOWAS, 2008). McNamee and Muyangwa (2021) draw lessons from half a century of peacebuilding in Africa, including the experience of early warning. Effective use of such frameworks depends on sustained collaboration among continental, regional and grassroots actors, so the capacity to monitor and evaluate at each level is a condition of policy implementation, not an add-on.

M&E as an evidence system for peacebuilding

Monitoring tracks implementation and early results; evaluation judges' relevance, effectiveness and sustainability against explicit objectives. In peacebuilding, practitioners conventionally integrate design, monitoring, and evaluation to test theories of change rather than assume them (Church & Rogers, 2006; OECD, 2012). Conflict sensitivity, meaning the avoidance of making tensions worse, is a central principle of the OECD guidance (OECD, 2012), and the author's work on mainstreaming conflict sensitivity in election programming (Obi, 2018b) applies it at the design stage.

Two features distinguish peacebuilding M&E from routine development M&E. The outcomes of interest (perceptions, trust, intergroup relations) are latent constructs that need deliberate measurement design, and causal pathways are rarely linear. Makan-Lakha (2016), writing from the experience of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), describes having to adapt logical frameworks and the assumptions of the development-aid paradigm to the dynamic and complex realities of peacebuilding work. Where baselines and explicit theories of change are missing, Paffenholz (2016) proposes an outcome-plausibility approach: reconstruct the theory of change, assess its logic, and compare the activities with comparative evidence on what has and has not worked in similar interventions.

Civil society organisations are both producers and subjects of evidence. Monitoring is one of the seven peacebuilding functions that civil society can perform (Paffenholz & Spurk, 2010, as cited in Paffenholz, 2016). The author's functional analysis of civil society peacebuilding (Obi, 2018a) and joint work on local ownership (Obi & Otu, 2018) and on the challenges and prospects of civil society in African peacebuilding (Obi & Edet, 2023) are the starting point for the present question, which is what capacity local actors need to monitor and evaluate. That capacity is what allows local actors to sustain peacebuilding gains after external support is withdrawn.

Theory of change and institutional capacity

Weiss (1995) argued that complex programmes are hard to evaluate because the assumptions behind them are poorly articulated, and proposed theory-based evaluation in which practitioners make explicit the causal logic linking activities to intended change. Applied to M&E capacity building, the results chain runs from inputs (training, mentoring, data systems, funding) to outputs (evaluator skills, standardised tools, baselines), intermediate outcomes (timely feedback loops, adaptive management, informed decisions) and long-term impact (sustained peace and social cohesion), as shown in Figure 1, panel A.

A theory of change states what should happen but not whether organisations can make it happen. For this, the paper draws on the policy-capacity framework of Wu et al. (2015), which distinguishes three competences (analytical, operational and political) and three levels of capability (individual, organisational and system), and which is offered as a diagnostic tool for locating capacity gaps. Domorenok et al. (2021) likewise argue that institutional capacity is multidimensional and should be unpacked through empirical indicators. The two lenses

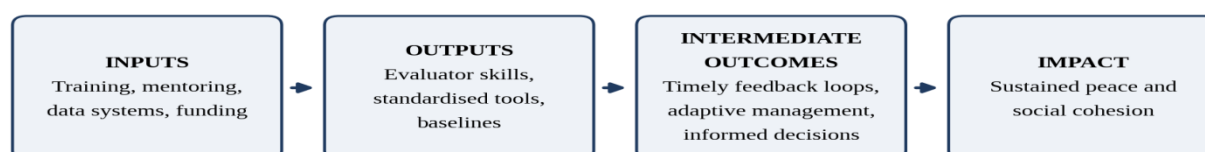
are complementary: the results chain specifies the links that must hold, and the capacity framework asks whether the enabling conditions for each link exist.

To make the diagnostic operational, six dimensions were derived by mapping the four links of the M&E data value chain (collect, manage, analyse, use; Figure 1, panel B) onto the competences and levels of the capacity framework, and by adding an explicit dimension for resources and institutional support, on which operational competence at system level depends (Table 1). Because the results chain and the data value chain describe the same process from different angles, a weakness in any dimension is expected to interrupt the conversion of outputs into outcomes.

Table 1. Six dimensions of M&E capacity used in the diagnostic.

Code	Dimension	What a gap looks like	Nearest component of Wu et al. (2015)
D1	Technical expertise and staffing	Too few personnel with M&E or analytic skills, or limited capacity to research and document work	Analytical competence; individual level
D2	Baselines and indicator systems	Indicators or baselines absent, deferred or not reported	Analytical competence; organisational level
D3	Data management and analytics	Evidence undocumented or unmanaged; limited analytic methods or tools	Operational competence; organisational level
D4	Standardisation and interoperability	Non-comparable tools; no shared standards or data-sharing arrangements across sites or agencies	Operational competence; system level
D5	Resources and institutional support	Funding, procurement, infrastructure or mandate constraints on M&E	Operational competence; system-level resources
D6	Feedback and evidence uptake	Findings not returned to implementers or decision-makers; no outcome follow-up	Political competence; organisational and system levels

A. Theory of change: results chain for M&E capacity building



B. M&E data value chain (where outputs must become outcomes)



C. Capacity base enabling A and B (Wu, Ramesh & Howlett, 2015)

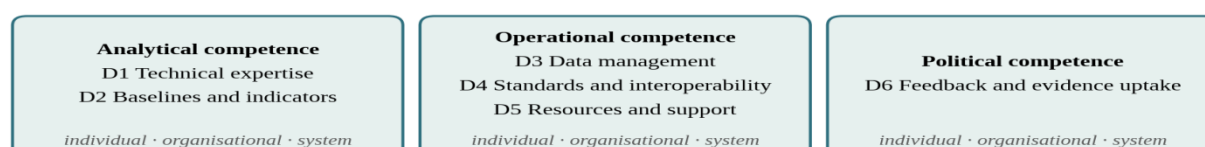


Figure 1. Analytical framework. (A) Theory-of-change results chain for M&E capacity building; (B) M&E data value chain; (C) capacity base, with dimensions D1–D6 (Table 1) assigned to the competences of Wu et al. (2015). Constructed by the author from Weiss (1995) and Wu et al. (2015).



METHODOLOGY

Research design and case selection

A multiple-case, document-based design was adopted. The design suits a bounded set of initiatives whose M&E arrangements cannot be manipulated and must be understood in context, and it permits both within-case description and cross-case comparison. Five cases were purposively selected, following a diverse-case logic (Seawright & Gerring, 2008), to (i) cover Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa; (ii) vary in type, from an NGO-led community project to a regional learning platform, a UN multi-agency project, an NGO-led local-governance intervention and an intergovernmental early-warning system; and (iii) have publicly accessible documentation (Table 2). The selection is illustrative rather than representative.

The choice of these particular initiatives, rather than others in the same regions, rests on three considerations. First, each represents a distinct institutional location of M&E capacity (community project, learning platform, UN multi-agency project, municipal governance intervention and intergovernmental system), so that together they span the individual, organisational and system levels of the capacity framework (Wu et al., 2015). Second, each is documented by at least one public source that reports on M&E design, data practice, staffing, resources, or the use of findings in enough detail to be coded; initiatives whose public record described activities but lacked detailed M&E arrangements were excluded. Third, the set pairs early-stage and mature arrangements (the Tunisian project at start-up and ECOWARN after two decades of operation), which allows the comparison to ask whether capacity gaps differ with system maturity.

Heterogeneity was accommodated in three ways. (i) The unit of analysis is the M&E arrangement of each initiative, not its peacebuilding content, so a community project and a regional early-warning system are compared on what they share: the collection, management, analysis and use of data. (ii) The six dimensions are defined functionally (Table 1) rather than by programme type, and the same questions and decision rules were applied to every case in a structured, focused comparison (George & Bennett, 2005). (iii) Type, scale, maturity and reference period are recorded as contextual attributes (Table 2) and are used to qualify, rather than pool, cross-case interpretation; the Tunisian gaps, for example, are read as start-up gaps. The aim is therefore analytic generalisation to the propositions in Section 2.3, not statistical generalisation to African peacebuilding initiatives as a population (Yin, 2018).

Table 2. The five cases and their principal sources.

#	Region	Initiative	Type and lead	Period covered	Principal sources
1	Central Africa	Empowering Children as Peacebuilders (ECaP), Damara sub-prefecture, Central African Republic	NGO-led community project; World Vision with local partner URU	Since 2014	Sunwoo et al. (2017)
2	East Africa	East Africa Learning Hub on Governance, Peacebuilding and Local Faith Actors (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda)	Regional learning platform; JLI and TAABCO	Launched April 2022; scoping study 2024	JLI (n.d.); Ogenga et al. (2024)
3	North Africa	Sustaining peace in Tunisia through the inclusion of youth at the local level (Peacebuilding Fund)	UN multi-agency project (UNDP, UN Women, UNESCO) with seven municipalities	Started December 2018; progress report November 2019	UNDP et al. (2019); UNV (2020)



4	Southern Africa	Mbizana Local Municipality governance and public-participation intervention, Eastern Cape, South Africa	NGO-led action research; Good Governance Africa	2017–2020	Dube et al. (2021)
5	West Africa	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN)	Intergovernmental early-warning system, with civil society partner WANEP	Launched 2003; sources to 2024	ECOWAS (1999, 2008, 2023); Gnanguenon (2021); Aeby (2024)

SOURCES AND ANALYTIC PROCEDURE

Document selection. Document analysis followed Bowen (2009). For each initiative, a source was eligible if it (a) was publicly accessible; (b) was written in English; (c) referred specifically to the named initiative or, for ECOWARN, to the system of which it is part; and (d) contained at least one statement about M&E design, data practice, staffing, resources, coordination or the use of findings. Sources were located through the websites of the implementing and convening organisations, the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Gateway and scholarly databases. Legal instruments and news items (ECOWAS, 1999, 2008; UNV, 2020) were used for context and supplied no coded evidence. Table A2 lists every source with its type, its authorship relative to the initiative and the dimensions it evidenced.

The evidence comprises publicly available programme case studies, donor progress reports, institutional publications, policy briefs and peer-reviewed articles (Table 2). Each source was read for statements about M&E design, data practices, staffing, resources, coordination and use of findings. Statements were assigned to the six dimensions in Table 1 and coded on a four-level evidence scale (operational definitions, decision rules and examples in Table 3): D, a documented gap (the source explicitly reports the weakness); I, an indicated gap (the weakness is inferred from reported facts, for example, outcomes reported without baseline data, or a reported resource limitation whose M&E consequence is not stated); S, a strength (capacity is explicitly evidenced); and –, not evidenced (the source is silent). The decision rule was conservative: a cell was coded ‘–’ unless a citable statement supported another code. The evidence for every coded cell is set out in Appendix A. Codes were then tabulated by dimension and by case. Because the cases are few and purposively selected, the tabulations are descriptive and are not prevalence estimates.

Handling ambiguity. Four further rules governed ambiguous material. (1) Only implemented practice was coded as a strength; planned or intended practice was not (UNDP’s intention that local actors use the Tunisian indicator methodology after the project, for example, was not coded S). (2) A single statement could support codes in two dimensions only when it evidenced two distinct failures, such as the vacant M&E post (D1) and the recruitment delay behind it (D5) in Tunisia. (3) A cell containing both strengths and weaknesses was coded by the weaker element, with the strength recorded in Appendix A, as for feedback in Mbizana (D6). (4) Where sources diverged, a documented statement took precedence over an inference. Every ‘I’ code states its inferential step in Appendix A, so that readers can reject the inference if they find it unpersuasive.

Reliability. Coding was carried out by a single analyst, and no inter-coder reliability coefficient was computed. Because each code rests on a small number of explicit, citable statements rather than on the interpretation of large volumes of text, reliability was pursued through transparency rather than agreement statistics (O’Connor & Joffe, 2020): the decision rules are explicit, the default code is conservative, and Appendix A reproduces the evidence and rationale for each of the 23 coded cells so that any reader can re-code them. Codes were applied to the state of each initiative as described in its latest coded source (Table 2), which keeps the reference point consistent within, though not across, cases.



Table 3. Operational definitions and decision rules for the four-level evidence scale.

Code	Operational definition	Decision rule	Example from the corpus
D	The source itself states the weakness in terms that map onto the dimension.	No inference required; at least one citable statement. Takes precedence over I where sources diverge.	Tunisia, D1: the M&E expert was not yet in post at month 12 (UNDP et al., 2019).
Indicated gap	The weakness follows from reported facts through one explicit inferential step.	Applies when (a) an element expected for the reported claim is absent (e.g. outcomes reported without baselines) or (b) a resource or institutional constraint is reported but its M&E consequence is not. The inference is stated in Appendix A.	ECaP, D2: outcomes reported qualitatively, with no baseline–endline values (Sunwoo et al., 2017). Mbizana, D5: budget reported as insufficient; M&E effect inferred (Dube et al., 2021).
S Strength	Capacity in the dimension is explicitly evidenced as implemented practice.	Plans and intentions do not qualify. If the same cell also shows a gap, the gap is coded and the strength is recorded in Appendix A.	Mbizana, D3: computer-assisted interviewing on CommCare by trained local fieldworkers (Dube et al., 2021).
– Not evidenced	No citable statement bears on the dimension.	Default code. Silence is not treated as evidence of absence.	ECaP, D1, D3, D4: the public record is silent on M&E staffing, data management and standardisation.

Limitations and data availability

Five limitations qualify the findings. First, most sources were written to describe or promote programmes rather than to assess M&E capacity, so silence is not evidence of absence and ‘indicated’ codes rest on inference. Second, three sources (Sunwoo et al., 2017; Ogenga et al., 2024; Dube et al., 2021) were produced by the implementing or convening organisations and may understate their weaknesses. Third, the sources differ in date and scope: the Tunisian report is a start-up snapshot from November 2019, whereas ECOWARN has operated since 2003. Fourth, coding was carried out by a single analyst, so no inter-coder agreement can be reported; transparency is provided instead through Appendix A. Only English-language sources were used. All data are drawn from the published sources listed in the References, and no new datasets were generated.

The reliance on public documents deserves emphasis. Undocumented capacities, informal practices (such as unwritten feedback between field staff and managers) and the perspectives of local practitioners seldom appear in programme reports and donor filings. The seven ‘not evidenced’ cells are where such capacity is most likely to be hidden, so the counts may overstate weaknesses where public records are thin while understating informal strengths. Triangulation across source types is also uneven: only ECOWARN is covered by sources independent of its implementers (Table A2). Fifth, the design identifies the presence of capacity gaps; it cannot show that any particular gap caused weaker peacebuilding outcomes (Section 5.3). The findings should therefore be tested through interviews with M&E staff and decision-makers, stakeholder validation workshops and access to internal M&E records (Section 7).

CASE FINDINGS

Central Africa: Empowering Children as Peacebuilders (ECaP), Central African Republic

ECaP is a community-based approach to the protection and empowerment of children affected by conflict in the Damara sub-prefecture. Since 2014, World Vision CAR has worked with about 4,900 children and adolescents in the sub-prefecture, including 590 formerly associated with armed groups (Sunwoo et al., 2017). Peace Clubs in seven villages are overseen by committees of youth and women’s representatives, religious leaders and village chiefs; the local partner, URU, implements them, while World Vision developed and funded the project.



M&E evidence. The case study documents a participatory design-and-adaptation process: a week-long consultation with community leaders, conflict-affected children, Christian and Muslim faith leaders and youth groups; a multi-sectoral assessment; interviews commissioned from an external consultancy; and focus group discussions used to check that targeting criteria were understood. Outcomes are reported mainly in qualitative and self-reported terms: reduced negative coping, growing trust, and no reported re-recruitment among children in the targeted communities. The report cites situational figures on the reintegration of children formerly associated with armed groups from a local development plan but publishes no project baseline–endline indicator values or targets (Sunwoo et al., 2017).

Capacity assessment. Adaptive learning is the clearest strength: the peer-support model was redesigned when early implementation showed that most children were not yet able to offer peer support, and the response was a whole-of-community approach (Sunwoo et al., 2017). The absence of published baseline–endline indicators is coded as an indicated gap (D2). The report also documents that only 34% of CAR’s 2016 humanitarian funding needs were met and links chronic underfunding to short-term project design; ECaP itself relied on private fundraising by World Vision Korea and was originally designed for two Peace Clubs (D5, indicated, because the consequence for longitudinal monitoring is inferred). The public record is silent on M&E staffing, data management and standardisation.

East Africa: the JLI East Africa Learning Hub

The Hub was launched in April 2022 by the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities (JLI) with TAABCO Research and Development Consultants (Kenya). It brings together researchers, faith organisations and practitioners from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya (JLI, n.d.; Ogenga et al., 2024). It is a learning platform rather than a service-delivery programme, so its M&E capacity question concerns evidence generation and use. Listening dialogues held before the launch identified gaps in the evidence on faith actors’ roles and a lack of regional mechanisms for coordination and the sharing of best practice (JLI, n.d.).

M&E evidence. A scoping study drawing on 17 documents and interviews with ten key informants in each country (September–November 2022) found that faith actors contribute to locally rooted evidence but that such research is rarely recognised or adopted in national, regional or international decision-making (Ogenga et al., 2024). The Tanzanian dialogue reported that the contributions of faith-based institutions and civil society remained largely undocumented, and the Kenyan dialogue called for institutional evidence to be mapped. The main challenges were financial constraints, political interference, partisanship and limited capacity to conduct research; faith actors also have limited capacity to document their work, and some evidence production may be driven by donor agendas. The study nonetheless describes a Kenya–Zanzibar interfaith project in which partners were involved from inception in tool development, baselines, monitoring and exit surveys, illustrating the participatory M&E practice that the Hub seeks to spread (Ogenga et al., 2024).

Capacity assessment. The documented gaps span five dimensions: research and documentation skills (D1), undocumented evidence (D3), absent coordination mechanisms (D4), financial constraints and donor influence (D5) and weak uptake of local evidence in decision-making (D6). No baseline or indicator system is described for the Hub itself (D2 not evidenced), and the sources do not discuss digital tools.

North Africa: sustaining peace in Tunisia through youth inclusion

The Peacebuilding Fund project began in December 2018 with an approved budget of US\$2.99 million shared by UNDP (US\$1.99 million), UNESCO (US\$0.50 million) and UN Women (US\$0.50 million). It works with marginalised young people, particularly those not in education, employment or training, in seven southern municipalities, with UN Volunteers coordinating activities in each municipality (UNDP et al., 2019; UNV, 2020).

M&E evidence. The semi-annual progress report of 30 November 2019 rated overall progress as ‘off track’ because of hiring and procurement delays. Its results framework set an end-of-project target of 75% of youth reporting improvement on social cohesion, resilience and sustainability, but the corresponding indicators, baselines and targets were still ‘to be designed’ with an international indicator partner (Everyday Peace



Indicators) and with youth, and recorded progress was zero. Baselines for outcomes on public perceptions of youth and stakeholder coordination were still to be established, and an M&E expert was expected to take up the post in early December 2019. Revised targets were proposed after start-up; for example, the number of communities was to fall from 42 to 21 while the youth target was retained (UNDP et al., 2019). The report also records UNDP's preference that the indicator methodology should build the capacity of local actors to use it after the project ends.

Capacity assessment. The report documents gaps in staffing (D1: the M&E expert not yet in post), in indicator and baseline development (D2) and in resources and procurement (D5: delayed hiring, delayed partner contracts, and expenditure of about US\$330,000 against the US\$2.99 million budget). Because indicators were to be designed within youth-selected projects and aggregated across them, comparability across municipalities is an inferred risk (D4, indicated). The evidence is a start-up snapshot from roughly month 12 of an 18-month project with a six-month extension, and it cannot show how the gaps were later addressed.

Southern Africa: Mbizana Local Municipality, South Africa

Good Governance Africa (GGA) ran a participatory action research and intervention programme in Mbizana Local Municipality, Eastern Cape, between 2017 and 2020, after its 2016 Government Performance Index ranked the municipality lowest nationally. Conflict in Mbizana took the form of service-delivery protests, at times violent, rooted in poor governance and a trust deficit between residents and the municipality (Dube et al., 2021).

M&E evidence. Phase one (March 2017–March 2019) included a citizen survey of 1,000 respondents along a 32 km transect, collected by trained local fieldworkers using computer-assisted personal interviewing on smartphones or tablets (CommCare), together with an informal-economy survey, qualitative interviews and feedback sessions with about 100 participants. Phase two (March–December 2019) used ward-committee workshops that included a knowledge-baseline questionnaire and a community-profile questionnaire, focus groups with the municipality's public participation unit, a technical workshop for finance officials and a bridging workshop that produced a draft public participation framework. Dissatisfaction with municipal performance ranged from 57% to 68% across domains, and two in three residents (66%) reported being unhappy with the municipality (Dube et al., 2021).

Capacity assessment. Mbizana shows the strongest data-collection practice among the five cases: trained local fieldworkers (D1), a baseline survey and baseline questionnaires (D2) and digital data capture (D3) are all evidenced. Two indicated gaps qualify this. The municipal budget of R360 million in 2017 was reported to be insufficient, after personnel costs, for satisfactory service delivery, and local governments generally are poorly funded (D5, indicated, because the implications for sustaining participatory monitoring are inferred). And although baseline findings were fed back to participants and officials, the article reports no endline measurement; the draft framework was still to be adopted by the council, and conclusions about restored confidence rest largely on participants' statements and the authors' observations (D6, indicated). The authors themselves suggest that future work use affordable ICT platforms for sustained two-way engagement (Dube et al., 2021).

West Africa: the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN)

ECOWARN is the operational core of the sub-regional early-warning system envisaged in Chapter IV of the 1999 ECOWAS Protocol (ECOWAS, 1999) and was launched in 2003. It monitors human-security indicators in 15 countries through a Consolidated Situation Room in Abuja (formerly the Observation and Monitoring Centre) and 77 national field monitors (five per country and seven in Nigeria) who submit weekly local data. National teams are coordinated by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), and since 2017 national coordination centres have replaced the four regional bureaux (Gnanguenon, 2021). WANEP has been involved in operationalising ECOWARN from the outset (Aeby, 2024).

M&E evidence. ECOWARN has the most developed measurement architecture of the five cases. Observations are recorded against 55 predefined conflict indicators, indicators were selected through a participatory process

in the system's early stages, and in October 2023 ECOWAS convened statisticians, computer scientists and data-management specialists to evaluate and validate the risk-calculation method and to develop complementary approaches (ECOWAS, 2023; Gnanguenon, 2021). The experts recommended exploring normalisation, correlation and modelling, developing validation metrics, and assessing complementary data sources and artificial intelligence (ECOWAS, 2023). The weaknesses documented lie downstream and between institutions. ECOWARN is not directly linked to the AU Situation Room; a data-sharing agreement exists, and the AU maintains indicators to which ECOWARN may contribute, but interoperability remains a priority, and some states are reluctant to share sensitive data or question the methodology. The early warning–early action gap persists, aggravated by the lack of feedback from decision-makers to early-warning officials: decision-makers often describe the recommendations they receive as generic, while officials receive no feedback with which to tailor their analyses (Gnanguenon, 2021). Aeby (2024) likewise identifies the warning–response gap as the foremost limitation of such systems and lists the low capacity of many civil society organisations among the constraints on their participation.

Capacity assessment. Strengths are evident in the indicator system (D2). Documented gaps concern standardisation and interoperability (D4) and feedback and uptake (D6); indicated gaps concern analytic methods still under review (D3), participant capacity and the fit of training offers (D1), and resources for early action on transregional conflict (D5) (Aeby, 2024; ECOWAS, 2023; Gnanguenon, 2021). Gnanguenon (2021) cautions that many training offers do not meet real needs and that improving technical capacity alone cannot close the gap, since political relationships and the willingness of decision-makers to act matter as much. See also Obi (2025) on operationalising conflict early warning and response systems and Akujobi and Obi (2024) on early warning and response in disaster risk management in Nigeria.

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Patterns across the cases

Figure 2 summarises the coding (Appendix A provides the evidence). Of the 30 case–dimension cells, 18 were coded as gaps (10 documented, 8 indicated), five as strengths and seven as not evidenced. Four patterns stand out.

	Central Africa ECaP (CAR)	East Africa JLI Hub	North Africa Tunisia PBF	Southern Africa Mbizana	West Africa ECOWARN	Gap evidenced
D1 Technical expertise and staffing	–	D	D	S	I	3 of 5
D2 Baselines and indicator systems	I	–	D	S	S	2 of 5
D3 Data management and analytics	–	D	–	S	I	2 of 5
D4 Standardisation and interoperability	–	D	I	–	D	3 of 5
D5 Resources and institutional support	I	D	D	I	I	5 of 5
D6 Feedback and evidence uptake	S	D	–	I	D	3 of 5

D Documented gap
I Indicated gap (inferred)
S Strength evidenced
– Not evidenced in sources

Cell codes are the author's document-based assessments (Appendix A); counts are descriptive ($n = 5$, purposive).

Figure 2. Cross-case evidence matrix: M&E capacity dimensions by case. D = documented gap; I = indicated gap; S = strength; – = not evidenced. The right-hand column counts cases with a documented or indicated gap.



Resources and institutional support are a constraint everywhere. Constraints on D5 were evidenced in all five cases, documented in two (East Africa and Tunisia) and indicated in three. In each case, the constraint was tied to the project cycle: short-term humanitarian funding in the Central African Republic, financial and donor-agenda pressures on the Hub, procurement and recruitment delays in Tunisia, a stretched municipal budget in Mbizana and inadequate resources for early action in West Africa. Interpretation needs care, because in three cases the constraint is reported at programme or institutional level and its effect on M&E is inferred. The pattern is nonetheless consistent with the finding of Masvaure and Fish (2022) that M&E capacity strengthening in Africa is ad hoc and rarely measured, and with the observation of Ogenga et al. (2024) that donor agendas can shape evidence production.

Weaknesses appear to move down the data value chain as systems mature. In the Tunisian project, documented at start-up, and in ECaP, whose public record lacks baseline–endline indicators, the evidenced weaknesses concern indicators, baselines and staffing (D1, D2). In ECOWARN, which has a predefined indicator set and a long operating record, the documented weaknesses concern interoperability and feedback (D4, D6). This is consistent with theory-of-change logic: outputs such as trained monitors and standard indicators do not automatically become intermediate outcomes such as feedback loops and adaptive management. Because the cases differ in type as well as maturity, the pattern is a hypothesis for further testing rather than a finding.

Tools are not the binding constraint. The two clearest strengths, digital baseline surveying with locally trained fieldworkers in Mbizana and a participatory, predefined indicator system in ECOWARN, coexist with weaknesses in outcome follow-up (Mbizana, D6) and in the use of findings (ECOWARN, D6). No source documents a digital-tool deficit as such; the only explicit data-management gap concerns undocumented evidence in East Africa (D3). This cautions against assuming that technology deficits are the primary obstacle, and it supports Gnanguenon’s (2021) view that technical capacity alone is insufficient. It also tempers a common recommendation: investment in digital infrastructure and data literacy is warranted, but it should follow the design of the arrangements through which findings will be used.

Capacity building itself goes unmeasured. None of the sources reports a baseline or follow-up measure of M&E capacity. The closest is UNDP’s intention that local actors should be able to use the indicator methodology after the Tunisian project ends (UNDP et al., 2019). This mirrors Masvaure and Fish’s (2022) observation that the effectiveness of capacity-strengthening initiatives is rarely measured, and it limits what can be said about which forms of capacity building work.

Sources of the capacity gaps

The six dimensions locate where the data value chain breaks; they do not say why. To distinguish causes, each of the 18 coded gaps was assigned to the principal source of constraint reported or implied in its evidence (Appendix A): technical skills, resources, organisational procedures, institutional arrangements or political constraints. The assignment records the proximate cause; secondary causes are noted in Table 4.

Table 4. Coded gaps classified by principal source of constraint.

Source of constraint	What the gap reflects	Gaps (case, dimension, code)	n	Nearest remedy
Technical skills	Insufficient research, documentation or analytic skills among those who produce evidence.	East Africa Hub D1 (D), D3 (D); ECOWARN D1 (I), D3 (I)	4	Targeted, needs-based training and mentoring; analytic method review.
Resources	Funding or infrastructure too short-term or too small to sustain M&E.	ECaP D5 (I); East Africa Hub D5 (D; secondary: donor agendas); Mbizana D5 (I); ECOWARN D5 (I)	4	Multi-year M&E budget lines; pooled or core funding.



Organisational procedures	Sequencing, recruitment, procurement or reporting practices within the implementing organisation.	ECaP D2 (I; secondary: short funding cycle); Tunisia D1 (D), D2 (D), D5 (D; administrative rather than financial: spending lagged budget)	4	Design indicators and recruit M&E staff before implementation; fast-track procurement.
Institutional arrangements	Absent mandates, coordination mechanisms or formal adoption linking actors and systems.	East Africa Hub D4 (D); Tunisia D4 (I); Mbizana D6 (I; framework awaiting council adoption)	3	Mandates, common indicator standards, data-sharing and adoption procedures.
Political constraints	Reluctance of states or decision-makers to share data or act on evidence.	East Africa Hub D6 (D; political interference, partisanship); ECOWARN D4 (D; state reluctance to share data), D6 (D; decision-maker responsiveness)	3	Accountability and incentives for response; structured feedback obligations.

Only four of the 18 gaps rest mainly on technical skills, and all four concern research, documentation or analytic capacity rather than tools. Resource constraints account for four gaps, all in D5. Organisational procedures account for another four, concentrated in the Tunisian start-up and in ECaP's reporting practice; these are failures of sequencing and administration rather than of money or skill. Institutional arrangements and political constraints account for six gaps between them, and they explain the interoperability and uptake gaps (D4, D6) that persist in the most mature system. Read through Wu et al. (2015), skills gaps correspond to analytical competence, resource and procedural gaps to operational competence, and institutional and political gaps to operational and political competence at the system level. The distinction matters for remedies: training addresses the first category, multi-year funding the second, sequencing and procurement planning the third and mandates and data-sharing protocols the fourth, while political gaps require incentives and accountability for decision-makers to respond, which no M&E investment alone can supply (Gnanguenon, 2021). The classification thus reinforces the finding that tools are not the binding constraint.

Capacity gaps and peacebuilding outcomes

The study identifies recurring capacity gaps, but its design cannot demonstrate that any individual gap produced weaker peacebuilding outcomes: outcome data are largely absent from the sources, the cases pursue different outcomes, and there is no counterfactual. The evidence supports a plausibility argument, in the sense of Paffenholz (2016), at two points and an evaluability argument at the others. In ECOWARN, the sources directly associate the documented feedback and uptake gap (D6) with the early warning–early action gap, that is, with a failure at the intermediate-outcome link of the results chain (Gnanguenon, 2021; Aeby, 2024). In Tunisia, the staffing, indicator and procurement gaps coincide with an 'off track' rating and zero recorded progress on the youth social-cohesion indicator, although at month 12 this reflects delay rather than demonstrated failure (UNDP et al., 2019).

In ECaP and Mbizana, the principal consequence of the gaps is epistemic. Without baseline–endline measurement, the reported gains in trust and confidence cannot be verified, so the gaps limit what can be known about outcomes rather than demonstrably worsening them; this is the evaluability problem identified in the OECD (2012) guidance. The link between M&E capacity and peacebuilding outcomes is therefore best treated as a theory-of-change assumption to be tested rather than a finding, and step 4 of the framework in Section 6 is designed to generate the data needed to test it.

Implications for theory

The findings refine both frameworks. For the theory of change, the assumptions that connect outputs to intermediate outcomes (that data will be shared, that decision-makers will respond, that funding will persist) deserve explicit treatment as assumptions to be monitored, since they are where several cases break. For the policy-capacity framework, the emphasis on individual skills in capacity strengthening (Masvaure & Fish, 2022) addresses analytical competence at the individual level, whereas the recurring gaps in the sample sit in operational and political competence at the organisational and system levels (D4–D6; Wu et al., 2015).

Capacity building that does not reach these levels may produce skilled individuals in systems that cannot use what they produce.

A FRAMEWORK FOR M&E CAPACITY BUILDING

The evidence supports a five-step cycle (Figure 3) organised around three principles drawn from the cases and the literature: local ownership, conflict sensitivity and explicit theory-of-change logic.

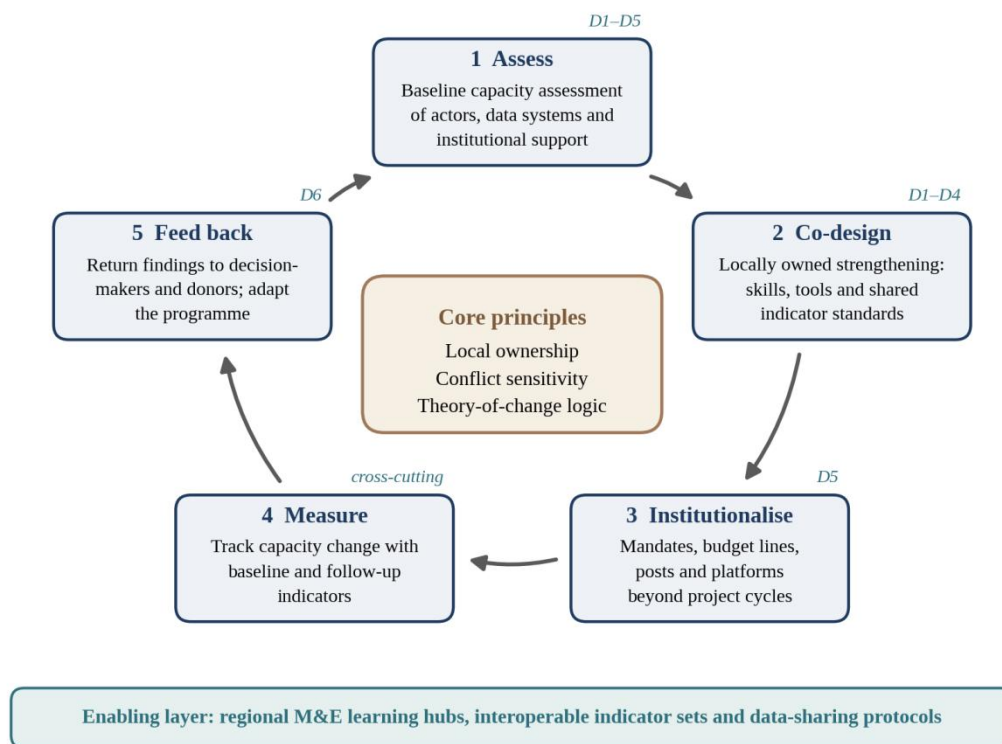


Figure 3. Proposed five-step cycle for locally owned M&E capacity building, with the capacity dimensions (D1–D6) each step addresses. Constructed by the author from the cross-case findings.

1. Assess. Begin with a context-specific capacity assessment that identifies the key actors and their baseline M&E capabilities across the six dimensions, so that gaps in knowledge, skills, systems and support inform the design of any training or system investment. Wu et al. (2015) provide the diagnostic logic; the Tunisian project, where indicator design was still under way a year into implementation, illustrates the difficulty of building indicators once implementation has started.

2. Co-design. Design strengthening with local actors rather than for them. Participatory adaptation in EC&P, youth-led indicator design in Tunisia and ward-committee baselining in Mbizana all point to co-design as a route to ownership (Sunwoo et al., 2017; UNDP et al., 2019; Dube et al., 2021), consistent with the case for local ownership in peacebuilding (Obi & Otu, 2018). Combine skills training with tools and shared indicator standards so that individual skills are not stranded in incompatible systems (D1–D4). Community-led peacebuilding within decentralised governance, examined for Sierra Leone by Fofanah and Obi (2026), is a relevant parallel for municipal-level M&E arrangements such as those in Tunisia and Mbizana.

3. Institutionalise. Embed M&E in governance architecture through mandates, budget lines, dedicated posts and durable platforms so that capacity survives the project cycle (D5). This is the step on which every case evidences a constraint.



4. Measure. Treat capacity building as a programme with its own theory of change and indicators: measure capacity at baseline and follow-up, and report whether trained actors and systems deliver the outputs and outcomes in Figure 1 (Masvaure & Fish, 2022).

5. Feedback. Close the loop by giving early-warning and M&E officials structured feedback from decision-makers and donors, and by requiring that findings inform programme and policy decisions (D6). Gnanguenon (2021) identifies the lack of such feedback as one of the biggest challenges facing ECOWARN and the continental system.

Operationalising the cycle. Table 5 specifies, for each step, the responsible actors, expected outputs, measurable progress indicators and the mechanism for assessing progress. Two design choices make the cycle measurable. First, steps 1 and 4 apply the same six-dimension diagnostic and evidence scale used in this study (Tables 1 and 3), so capacity can be scored at baseline and follow-up on a common metric, for example, the number of dimensions coded as strengths at the start and end of a funding cycle. Second, each indicator is tied to a dimension and to a source of constraint (Table 4), so progress can be reported by where and why capacity changed. The indicators are illustrative and should be adapted and agreed with local actors at step 2.

Table 5. Operationalisation of the five-step capacity-building cycle.

Step (dimensions)	Responsible actors	Expected outputs	Measurable progress indicators	Progress assessment
1. Assess (D1–D6)	Implementing organisation's M&E lead with local partners; independent facilitator where possible	Capacity baseline scored on D1–D6; gap register classified by source (Table 4)	Assessment completed before implementation (yes/no); share of D1–D6 with a baseline score; number of stakeholder groups consulted	Baseline report validated with local actors; re-applied at step 4
2. Co-design (D1–D4)	Local actors and CSOs, government counterparts, donor	Jointly agreed M&E plan; indicator set with baselines and targets; training plan matched to the gap register	Share of indicators with baseline and target before the first activity; share co-developed with local actors; share aligned with a national or regional standard; staff trained and passing a competency check	Review of the M&E plan at inception; competency check after training
3. Institutionalise (D5)	Governments and municipal councils, regional bodies, organisational leadership, donors	M&E mandate or policy; dedicated budget line; funded posts; data-sharing protocol	Share of programme budget allocated to M&E; M&E posts filled and time taken to fill them; protocol signed and data exchanged in the last quarter; M&E function retained 12 months after external funding ends	Annual institutional review; post-funding follow-up
(D6)	Decision-makers (governments, regional bodies, donors); early-warning and M&E officials; communities	Structured feedback mechanism; formal management responses; community feedback sessions	Share of recommendations receiving a formal response within an agreed period; share of warnings or findings followed by a documented decision; number of community feedback sessions; documented programme adaptations based on M&E findings	Quarterly feedback log; results feed step 1 of the next cycle



An enabling layer of regional M&E learning hubs, interoperable indicator sets and data-sharing protocols supports every step. The JLI East Africa Hub is an example of the learning-hub model, and ECOWARN and WANEP show how a regional system and a civil society network can share data collection and analysis (Aeby, 2024; Gnanguenon, 2021; JLI, n.d.). Table 6 translates the cycle into actions for each stakeholder group.

Table 6. Priority actions by stakeholder group, mapped to the capacity dimensions and the supporting evidence.

Stakeholder	Priority actions	Dimensions	Evidence base
Governments and regional bodies (AU, regional economic communities, national and municipal authorities)	Integrate community-based M&E into governance structures and let local actors co-design indicators and track outcomes; fund M&E posts and budget lines; adopt interoperable indicator sets and data-sharing protocols; give structured feedback to early-warning and M&E officers.	D4, D5, D6	Gnanguenon (2021); UNDP et al. (2019); Dube et al. (2021)
Civil society organisations and local actors	Institutionalise feedback loops between M&E findings and policy programming; document and publish evidence; take part in indicator design; use participatory data-collection tools.	D1, D3, D6	Ogenga et al. (2024); Sunwoo et al. (2017); Obi & Edet (2023)
Donors and international organisations	Fund multi-year M&E capacity rather than one-off training; require capacity baselines and follow-up; support local research priorities rather than imposing donor agendas; coordinate training offers to avoid duplication.	D1, D5	Masvaure & Fish (2022); Ogenga et al. (2024); Gnanguenon (2021)
Regional learning hubs, universities and networks	Establish regional M&E learning hubs to share tools, curricula and lessons, drawing on models such as ECOWARN–WANEP and the JLI Hub; build pipelines of local evaluators.	D1, D4	JLI (n.d.); Gnanguenon (2021); Aeby (2024)
All stakeholders	Design context-specific M&E frameworks rather than one-size-fits-all systems; invest in digital infrastructure and data literacy (collection, analysis, visualisation, reporting) once the arrangements for using findings are agreed.	D3	Dube et al. (2021); ECOWAS (2023)

CONCLUSION

Capacity building for M&E is not merely a technical exercise; it is a condition for evidence-based, locally owned peacebuilding. Across five initiatives in five regions, documented evidence points to a consistent picture: constraints in resources and institutional support in every case; weaknesses in expertise, interoperability and feedback in three each; and strengths in data capture and indicator design that nonetheless coexist with gaps in outcome follow-up and in the use of findings. The binding constraints appear to lie less in tools than in the arrangements that connect data to decisions.

The paper contributes a six-dimension diagnostic that links theory-of-change logic to a policy-capacity framework, a transparent cross-case evidence matrix, a classification of gaps by their principal source and a five-step capacity-building cycle operationalised with responsible actors, outputs and indicators. The findings are indicative rather than conclusive: the sample is small and purposive, the sources are secondary and vary in



date and authorship, and coding was carried out by a single analyst; moreover, the design cannot establish that particular gaps caused weaker peacebuilding outcomes.

Further work should (i) collect primary data from M&E staff and decision-makers in these and additional cases, including Sahel initiatives; (ii) follow capacity-building programmes longitudinally with baseline and follow-up indicators; (iii) test the hypothesis that capacity gaps move down the data value chain as systems mature; (iv) examine how conflict-sensitivity principles can be built into M&E capacity assessments; and (v) triangulate the document-based coding through interviews, stakeholder validation workshops and internal M&E records, and pilot the indicators proposed in Table 5.

DECLARATIONS

Data availability. All evidence is drawn from published sources listed in the References, and the coding is documented in Appendix A (Tables A1 and A2).

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APPENDIX A. EVIDENCE FOR CODED CELLS

Cells coded ‘not evidenced’ (–) are omitted. D = documented gap; I = indicated gap (inferred); S = strength. Sources are those listed in Table 2 and Table A2.

Table A1. Case–dimension evidence and coding rationale.

Case	Dim.	Code	Evidence and source
ECaP (CAR)	D2	I	Outcomes reported qualitatively (reduced negative coping, growing trust); situational percentages come from a local development plan; no project baseline–endline indicator values or targets are published (Sunwoo et al., 2017).
ECaP (CAR)	D5	I	Only 34% of CAR’s 2016 humanitarian funding needs met; chronic underfunding linked to short-term project design; ECaP relied on private fundraising and was designed for two Peace Clubs (Sunwoo et al., 2017). Effect on longitudinal M&E is inferred.
ECaP (CAR)	D6	S	Model adapted after a week-long consultation with community leaders, children, faith leaders and youth groups; peer-support component redesigned; targeting checked through focus groups (Sunwoo et al., 2017).
East Africa Hub	D1	D	Faith actors have limited capacity to document their work and to conduct research (Ogenga et al., 2024).
East Africa Hub	D3	D	Tanzanian dialogue: contributions largely undocumented; Kenyan dialogue: need to map institutional evidence (Ogenga et al., 2024).



East Africa Hub	D4	D	Hub created because of a lack of regional mechanisms to coordinate work and share best practice (JLI, n.d.); no coordination mechanisms among faith actors, CSOs, researchers, donors and policymakers (Ogenga et al., 2024).
East Africa Hub	D5	D	Financial constraints among the most crucial challenges in all three countries; some evidence production may be driven by donor agendas (Ogenga et al., 2024).
East Africa Hub	D6	D	Local evidence rarely recognised or adopted in decision-making; no convincing evidence that recommendations are adopted (Ogenga et al., 2024).
Tunisia PBF	D1	D	M&E expert identified but not yet in post (expected December 2019); wider team joined later than planned (UNDP et al., 2019).
Tunisia PBF	D2	D	Social-cohesion, resilience and sustainability indicators ‘to be designed’ with partners and youth; baselines and targets pending; recorded progress zero; baselines for perception and coordination outcomes to be established (UNDP et al., 2019).
Tunisia PBF	D4	I	Indicators to be designed within youth-selected projects and aggregated across projects, implying a comparability risk (inferred) (UNDP et al., 2019).
Tunisia PBF	D5	D	Hiring and procurement delays, including for the indicator partner; expenditure about US\$330,000 of a US\$2.99 million budget; progress rated off track (UNDP et al., 2019).
Mbizana	D1	S	Local fieldworkers selected and trained; chartered-accountant-led technical workshop for finance officials (Dube et al., 2021).
Mbizana	D2	S	Baseline citizen survey (n = 1,000); knowledge-baseline and community-profile questionnaires for committees (Dube et al., 2021).
Mbizana	D3	S	Computer-assisted personal interviewing with CommCare on smartphones or tablets (Dube et al., 2021).
Mbizana	D5	I	Municipal budget (R360 million in 2017) reported as insufficient for satisfactory service delivery after personnel costs; local governments generally poorly funded. Effect on sustaining participatory monitoring is inferred (Dube et al., 2021).
Mbizana	D6	I	Baseline findings fed back to about 100 participants and to officials; draft framework awaiting council adoption; no endline measurement reported; conclusions rest largely on qualitative statements; authors are the implementing organisation (Dube et al., 2021).
ECOWARN	D1	I	Low capacity of many CSOs among factors limiting participation in early-warning systems (Aeby, 2024); many trainings offered judged not to meet real needs (Gnanguenon, 2021).
ECOWARN	D2	S	55 predefined conflict indicators; participatory indicator selection in the early stages; risk-calculation method reviewed by statisticians and data specialists in 2023 (ECOWAS, 2023; Gnanguenon, 2021).
ECOWARN	D3	I	Experts recommended exploring normalisation, correlation, modelling and validation metrics and assessing complementary data sources and AI (ECOWAS, 2023); data quality flagged as a determinant of effectiveness (Gnanguenon, 2021).
ECOWARN	D4	D	Not directly linked to the AU Situation Room; data-sharing agreement and shared indicators exist, but interoperability remains a priority; some states reluctant to share sensitive data (Gnanguenon, 2021).
ECOWARN	D5	I	Inadequate resources for early action on transregional conflict (Gnanguenon, 2021).



ECOWARN	D6	D	Persistent early warning–early action gap; lack of feedback from decision-makers to early-warning officials (Gnanguenon, 2021); warning–response gap described as the foremost limitation of such systems (Aeby, 2024).
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Table A2. Source log: document type, authorship relative to the initiative and dimensions evidenced.

Source	Case	Document type	Authorship relative to the initiative	Dimensions evidenced
Sunwoo et al. (2017)	ECaP (CAR)	Programme case study	Implementer (World Vision)	D2, D5, D6
JLI (n.d.)	East Africa Hub	Web page	Convenor (JLI)	D4
Ogenga et al. (2024)	East Africa Hub	Scoping study (17 documents; key-informant interviews)	Convenor (JLI)	D1, D3, D4, D5, D6
UNDP et al. (2019)	Tunisia PBF	Donor progress report	Implementing agencies	D1, D2, D4, D5
UNV (2020)	Tunisia PBF	News feature	UN partner agency	Context only
Dube et al. (2021)	Mbizana	Peer-reviewed article	Implementer (Good Governance Africa)	D1, D2, D3, D5, D6
ECOWAS (1999, 2008)	ECOWARN	Legal instruments	Intergovernmental body	Context only
ECOWAS (2023)	ECOWARN	Institutional news release	Operator (ECOWAS Commission)	D2, D3
Gnanguenon (2021)	ECOWARN	Policy brief	Independent (EUISS)	D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6
Aeby (2024)	ECOWARN	Peer-reviewed article	Independent	D1, D6